

Brainstorming Strategies for Secondary Fellows: Before You Start Writing, Allow Yourself to Dream!

"The human mind once stretched by a new idea never goes back to its original dimensions."

Oliver Wendell Holmes

Freewriting is about picking up a pen and beginning to write. When you freewrite, you let your mind wander and your ideas flow. You make sure that all of your thoughts—no matter how silly they seem—are captured on paper. Don't judge your ideas while you are freewriting. Let mind wander, and let your pen document the journey!

Listing is about jotting as many ideas down as you possibly can in a rapid-fire fashion. Sometimes, it helps to do this with a partner or to speak into a recorder. This way, you can simply fire off your ideas and they can be captured by someone or something else.

Once you've selected a general topic, you can explore it with depth by using the **Three Perspectives** strategy. Ask yourself the following questions, and jot down your responses:

- Describe it: Describe your subject in detail. What is your topic? What are its components? What are its interesting and distinguishing features? What are its puzzles? Distinguish your subject from those that are similar to it. How is your subject unlike others?
- Trace it: What is the history of your subject? How has it changed over time? Why? What are the significant events that have influenced your subject?
- Map it: What is your subject related to? What is it influenced by? How? What does it influence? How? Who has a stake in your topic? Why? What fields do you draw on for the study of your subject? Why? How has your subject been approached by others? How is their work related to yours?

Creating Similes can help you learn more about your idea and expand your point of view. Here is how it works:

Finish this sentence:

_____ is/was/are/were LIKE _____

(Your Topic)

(Something Else)

Then, list or freewrite all of the ways that this might be true.

Fiddle With Genre to gain an entirely different perspective about your writing. If you've written a poem, reflect on how you might approach the same topic as an article or a short story. Could you turn your essay into a song? Remember that journal entry you wrote last week? Would it make a great blog post? Mix it up.

Find More Strategies by Exploring the Links Right Here:

<http://tinyurl.com/yd525u8>